

REMARKS

Claims 1-46 are now pending in the application. Claims 1 and 27 have been amended. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

The Examiner has rejected the claims under 35 U.S.C. §103 in view of Charlesworth (6,990,448) and Baker (6,092,044). Charlesworth describes a database annotation system that stores phoneme data. Baker describes a pronunciation generator for use in a speech recognizer.

The applicants' invention is a tool to help the linguist add new words to a lexicon (dictionary). When adding new words, a primary objective is to make sure the recognition system will be useable by a number of people (who may have different speech accents). To do this, the linguist must select several different phonetic pronunciations (to increase the chance that one will be sufficiently close to each speaker's accent to allow the recognizer to work). A Midwestern attorney, such as the undersigned, would pronounce "Boston" quite differently than the native Bostonians do on the radio program *Car Talk*.

Why not just add *every* phonetic pronunciation possible and use that? If the linguist does this there is a good chance that the recognizer may start making mistakes—choosing the wrong word because it sounds (to some degree) like a different word.

To help avoid this problem, the applicants' system includes a disambiguation mechanism that measures the similarity between voice tags, and detects and notifies the user if two or more tags are confusingly similar.

Applicants believe that the Baker reference, Figure 17, best illustrates the capability of the prior art as cited by the Examiner. In that figure, the user types a new phrase, "George Washington Goethals" and the system automatically generates a single pronunciation shown at 1756. The Baker technology is designed to work with a continuous speech recognizer of the type that is trained to recognize speech of a single user (the user can dictate into the computer and the software types what the user speaks). The Baker technology is used to allow the user to add new words or phrases (e.g., "George Washington Goethals") to the lexicon.

Baker is thus not intended for use by a linguist to add multiple different voice tags suitable to support recognition by multiple users with potentially different accents. In Baker, because the recognizer has already been trained to recognize the speech of that user (the speech models are already adapted) there is no need for Baker to be able to recognize different accents. If the undersigned has trained his Dragon Systems recognizer to recognize his Midwestern speech, it would be of little value to have the system recognize other accents.

Because the applicants' system is designed to accommodate multiple different voice tags for each entry in the lexicon, applicants' system must address a problem not addressed by Charlesworth or Baker. Applicants' system must be able to notify the user when two or more voice annotations will overlap onto different words in the lexicon. Thus if a particular pronunciation of "bastion" is recognized as "Boston" that voice tag needs to be flagged so that the linguist can either change it, so it will not be misrecognized, or eliminate it from the set of tags used. Applicants do this using a disambiguate mechanism. described at page 10 of the specification.

Accordingly, in order to more fully distinguish the applicants' invention from the cited art, the independent claims have been amended to recite applicants' disambiguate mechanism and process. It is respectfully submitted that the claims as amended now distinguish fully over the cited art.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action and the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

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E-Signature: /Gregory A. Stobbs/
By: Gregory A. Stobbs
Reg. No. 28,764
HARNESS, DICKEY & PIERCE, P.L.C.
P.O. Box 828
Bloomfield Hills, Michigan 48303
(248) 641-1600